

STATEMENT

In Support of The Millennium Pipeline Project

Presented by
**Sal Santamorena, Business Representative & Recording Secretary,
International Union of Operating Engineers Local 137
Briarcliff Manor, NY**
Wednesday, November 13, 2002

Thank you for the opportunity to address this hearing. My name is Sal Santamorena, and I am a resident of Putnam Valley, New York in Putnam County. On behalf of myself and more than 1,200 members of Operating Engineers Local Union 137, which is headquartered in Briarcliff Manor – and many of our members live along the proposed corridor for the pipeline – I am here today to go on record supporting the Millennium Project and the FERC certificate that supports it.

Let me start by saying that the forecast for energy in downstate New York should be of great concern for everyone in this room, regardless of where you stand on the issue. I will list here just three of the many compelling reasons to support the pipeline.

First, there is an ever-increasing demand for power. Twelve years ago, the Internet barely existed. Today it consumes more than 10 percent of our nation's energy resources. Twice this summer – in July and August – we bumped up to our state's energy ceiling. The companies that employ the men and women of Local 137 want to know that their computers will remain on, their utility bills will remain predictable, their offices will remain comfortable and that they can do their jobs when they come to work.

Secondly, it is time to replace our aging power plants and utilities with newer, safer facilities that are more energy efficient. This new pipeline will be safer, owing to its state-of-the-art construction and design characteristics. I will also say that in terms of safety, the FERC-approved route for the Millennium project will be using more than 90 percent of an existing energy corridor that augers well for public safety.

And thirdly, I will say that the need to assure market stability – to avoid wide swings in the price of power – will help be achieved with the building of the Millennium Pipeline. As you know, this project meets New York Governor's George Pataki's own initiatives to develop clean, dependable and economical energy project in response to our growing demand here in New York State.

Please allow this project to proceed. There's a lot riding on it. It's not just for my sake and my family's sake – and the sake of the more than 1,200 members of International Union of Operating Engineers Local 137. It's for the sake of a cleaner environment and the economic well being of the many communities that are now being asked to participate in its construction. Thank you.

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